

CHAPTER 4



RECREATION MANAGEMENT

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

The objective of BLM's recreation program is to ensure the continued availability of quality outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences that are not readily available from other sources. Specific program goals are the protection of visitor health and safety; protection of the natural, cultural, and other resources which provide the setting for a quality experience; enhancement of the public's enjoyment of these lands through education and interpretation; maintenance of high quality, universally accessible facilities; and resolution of user conflicts.

The Final Plan is designed to provide a balance between recreation use, protection of resources, visitor safety and needs of local residents. BLM will implement the following actions and guidelines:

- C Continue to follow the Supplementary Rules for managing visitor use on public land in the Taos Field Office (*Federal Register*; May 10, 1996). These rules are generally revised every five years, with an opportunity for public input. The next revision is scheduled for 2000.
- C Continue to collect user fees to comply with national policy and establish new fees consistent with policy and other local agency practices.
- C Controls will be established for boating on most segments of the Rio Grande with an opportunity for a small increase in private or commercial use in the Upper Gorge Unit and some growth in the Lower Gorge Unit.
- C Any new facilities or services would be located in areas already in use or would be provided when older facilities were scheduled for major repair or replacement.

Monitoring

The primary purpose of a monitoring program will be to track recreation use on the Rio Grande. This

tracking will yield numbers of recreation users, as

well as the social conditions that result from user interactions, and will help determine the effectiveness of the Rio Grande Corridor Plan. This data will help with compliance of Special Recreation Permit stipulations. In addition, monitoring will document conditions of the riparian zone including river access sites, campsites, springs and vegetation health.

Monitoring will take place during the high use season from May through September using a team of BLM rangers and volunteers. Although all segments of the Rio Grande in the planning area will be monitored, special emphasis will be placed on high use zones in the Lower Gorge where user interactions are most numerous. In addition to river user numbers, the count crew team will monitor quiet zones, outfitter launch windows, parking, and visitor satisfaction in order to determine if the Corridor Plan management actions are effective. Information compiled by this team will be presented annually so that an accurate picture of current conditions can be assessed.

In the more remote sections of the corridor the number of group encounters a user experiences is an indicator of the type of experience a visitor has. The count crew will conduct studies to determine the number of groups encountered on average in different river segments to determine if the remote nature of the canyon experience is being compromised.

Campsite and river access sites will be measured and photographed on a regular basis to determine the extent of human impacts. Representative undisturbed sites will be chosen in the riparian zone and monitored periodically by photo points and site characterization descriptions. Wildlife surveys will be conducted periodically by BLM wildlife biologists to indicate the overall health of the area. The discharge of springs occurring on BLM lands will be measured periodically in order to determine long-term trends.

SPECIAL RECREATION USE PERMITS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Criteria used by BLM to evaluate applications for commercial recreation on public lands in the Rio Grande Corridor are as follows:

- C BLM's ability to effectively administer the permit within the capability of the resource. The BLM will allow only the minimum number of outfitters needed to provide recreational services, while ensuring fair competition and an adequate level of service;
- C Consistency with management objectives for the area (such as suitability for a proposed use, or mitigation of traffic, congestion, conflicts with other uses, and timing); and
- C Whether the proposed service is readily or potentially available from vendors on private lands.

Outfitted Boating

The BLM will issue no new permits for use on the Rio Grande between the Lobatos Bridge and the Velarde Diversion Dam, outside of the approved and authorized transfer process; nor for use in the new Copper Hill ACEC. Existing Rio Grande boating permits may be transferred in their entirety to any qualified individual or company, but transfer of part of a permit (e.g., for use on one particular segment) will be allowed only to parties who already possess a Rio Grande permit. If the number of permits for segments south of John Dunn Bridge is reduced to less than 10 (e.g., through attrition, cancellation), new permit(s) may be issued to maintain this number. Segments above John Dunn Bridge will be maintained at five permits. (Additional restrictions on the use of permits are described in the following Boating section).

Allocations for commercial boating activities on the Rio Grande will be based on use figures collected for the 5 seasons prior to the year when allocations will go into effect. The figures for the two busiest years for each outfitter will be averaged and used to determine that outfitter's allowable use, launch size, and total number of launches. Commercial operators who fail to operate at least one commercial trip in one of the two preceding seasons on any one segment will lose permit privileges for that segment. Allocations will be adjusted every five years or as conditions warrant.

Outfitted Fishing Guide Services

Permits for the use of streams in New Mexico will be considered after case-by-case review. Permittees will be limited to one trip per day in the planning area with up to four people per trip (including guides). To address wildlife concerns, commercial-ly guided trips are prohibited along the Rio Grande between the Chiflo Trail downstream to the Big Arsenic Trail all year and in the Ute Mountain segment from April 1 to May 31.

Rock Climbing

Commercial permits will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Individuals would be required to have a permit only if they intended to permanently install hardware.

Other Commercial Uses and Special Events

The BLM will permit these on a case-by-case basis. The traditional Mother's Day event began in 1959, and will be allowed to continue, with daily boating use restrictions waived for use of the Lower Gorge segments. Other requested uses would have to comply with restrictions in place for the area in which the use is proposed.



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BOATING

Boating will be regulated according to guidelines listed below for the different segments of the Rio Grande and Rio Embudo. These guidelines, including limits on group size, restrictions on boating during certain times of the day or seasons, or closures at specific river flows, vary by segment, depending on the opportunities available, or the type of conflict between users or resources.

BLM will monitor this use throughout the season and work with outfitters, private boaters, residents and

other recreation users on a recurring basis to determine whether adjustments can/should be made to resolve new concerns or better meet the guidelines established for each segment. An annual meeting will be held with residents, private and commercial boaters, and other recreation users to assess the past season and recommend changes which could be made to resolve recurring conflicts, reduce congestion, assure equitable access, improve the quality of the environment, or address emerging issues.

RIO GRANDE - ALL SEGMENTS

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|-------------------|---|
| All Boaters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Emergency takeout will be allowed on public lands at all times. No landing is allowed on private lands, without landowner permission, except in an emergency. C No motorized watercraft will be allowed to use the Rio Grande from La Sauses Cemetery south to the Velarde Diversion Dam. C Each outfitted or private group must register each trip at the launch site. C All overnight parties, including solo kayakers, must use a firepan for all open fires, and a human waste carry-out system, preferably a portable system compatible with RV dump stations. C A toll-free number will be available for advance telephone reservations or to provide information on current boating conditions. The reservation system for segments requiring them will provide equitable access to launches for private and outfitted boaters. Commercial outfitters may be asked to verify a booking when making a reservation for a launch. |
| Outfitted Boaters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C See Table 4-1, <i>Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Upper Gorge</i>. |

RIO GRANDE - UPPER GORGE

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| <i>La Sauses Segment (La Sauses Cemetery to Lobatos Bridge)</i> | |
| All Boaters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C No restrictions will be placed on private or outfitted boaters. |
| Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C At La Sauses Recreation Site BLM will define parking areas to control damage to riparian habitat. Currently, BLM has an informal agreement with the landowner at Lobatos Bridge which allows for public use at the site and will continue efforts to acquire public access rights at Lobatos Bridge. |
| <i>Ute Mountain Segment (Lobatos Bridge to Lee Trail)</i> | |
| All Boaters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Launch/takeout access will be provided at Lobatos Bridge (as stated above), and from the Sunshine Valley and Lee trails. C The segment is closed to all boating from April 1 through May 31. C Two launches are allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, but only one can be overnight. All launches must be reserved in advance on a first-come basis. C A total of 16 people (passengers+guides, commercial or private) will be allowed each day. |
| Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Improvements at Lobatos Bridge, if access rights are acquired, will include a defined parking |

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area, and if use warrants, seasonal or permanent toilet facilities.

Razorblades Segment (Lee Trail to Chiflo Trail)

- All Boaters
- C Launch/takeout access will be provided at Lee, Sheep Crossing and Chiflo trails.
 - C To maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available, one launch for an overnight trip will be allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come first-serve basis. Overnight launches must be reserved in advance.
 - C Group size is limited to 16 people (passengers+guides).
 - C No additional restrictions will be placed on private/outfitted boating until monitoring shows that daily use is exceeding 32 people per day. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.

- Facilities
- C No improvements are planned to facilities.

Upper Box Segment (Chiflo Trail to Little Arsenic Trail)

- All Boaters
- C Launch/takeout access will be provided at Chiflo, Big Arsenic and Little Arsenic trails.
 - C To maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available, one launch for an overnight trip will be allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come first-serve basis. Overnight launches must be reserved in advance.
 - C Group size is limited to 16 people (passengers/guides).
 - C No additional restrictions will be placed on private/outfitted boating until monitoring shows that daily use is exceeding 32 people per day. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.

- Facilities
- C No facility changes are planned; restrooms and picnic tables will be maintained.

La Junta Segment (Little Arsenic Trail to John Dunn Bridge)

- All Boaters
- C Access will continue to be provided by several BLM/Forest Service trails (Little Arsenic, La Junta, Cebolla Mesa, Miners Trail). The takeout is located at John Dunn Bridge.

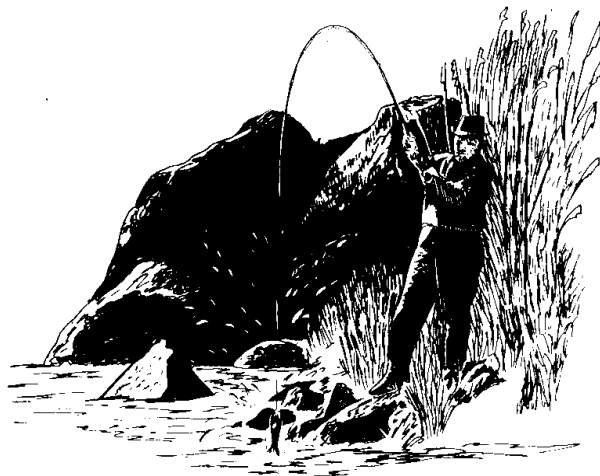
- Private Boaters
- C To maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available, one launch for an overnight trip (maximum group size of 16) will be allowed per day, and must be reserved in advance. No additional restrictions will be placed on private boaters until monitoring shows that daily use exceeds 32 people per day. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.

- Outfitted Boaters
- C Two launches will be allowed per day, but only one can be overnight, with no more than 16 people (passengers + guides) to maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available. Overnight launches will be available on a first-come first-serve basis.
 - C Friday, Saturday, Sunday and holiday launches will be assigned based on historic use records. The assignments will be assessed every 5 years, or as needed, and adjusted if necessary. Weekday launches will be available on a first-come first-serve basis.
 - C Outfitted groups are limited to 16 people (passengers + guides). Outfitters can occasionally exceed the group size for day trips through use of a pool - up to a maximum of 21 people per group, for a total of 10 times per season on a first-come basis.
 - C Outfitted launches will not be able to pass or takeout at John Dunn Bridge before noon on weekends and holidays to help relieve congestion at the bridge. Trips wishing to continue below John Dunn Bridge will not be required to obtain a separate Taos Box launch unless monitoring determines a need.

- Facilities
- C Primitive campsites and vault toilets are provided at the base of trails in the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. Primitive campsites and vault toilets are maintained by the Carson National Forest on Cebolla Mesa. Refer to the Taos Box segment for facilities at the John Dunn Bridge takeout.

Taos Box Segment (John Dunn Bridge to Taos Junction Bridge)

- All Boaters C Launch access is provided at John Dunn Bridge, along the west shoreline north of the bridge. The east shoreline north of the bridge will be used for overflow on the busiest weekends. South of the bridge, both shorelines are closed to boaters. Taos Junction Bridge is the main takeout (see the Orilla Verde/Pilar section for access information). Parking is available along the access road from Arroyo Hondo and may be expanded if BLM acquires additional lands in the Arroyo Hondo Grant.
- C Due to the limited number of campsites available, one trip per day of 16 people (guides + passengers) will be allowed to camp on this segment, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come first-serve basis.
- Private Boaters C Up to 200 boaters will be allowed per day on weekends and holidays, and 150 will be allowed per day on weekdays. No additional restrictions will be placed on private boaters until monitoring shows that daily use exceeds these limits. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.
- C Private boaters will be encouraged to launch before 1:00 p.m. to ensure completion of the run before twilight and minimize displacement of other users at John Dunn Bridge.
- Outfitted Boaters C See Table 4-1, *Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Upper Gorge*.
- Facilities C John Dunn Bridge: year-round restrooms will be installed and the northwest shoreline area expanded slightly. See the Orilla Verde/Pilar segment for facility development proposals in the Taos Junction Bridge area.



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Table 4-1 Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Upper Gorge

Segment	Outfitted Boater Guidelines
All Segments	Permits issued to outfitters specify the river segment in which they are allowed to conduct business. Four river segments will be allocated (La Junta, Taos Box, Orilla Verde (through Pilar only) and Racecourse). Commercial use on other segments will be on a first-come first-serve basis. For trips that originate in one segment and continue into another segment, launch requirements for both segments must be adhered to (for example, a Taos Box trip continuing through Pilar must use one of their allocated launches to continue down river). The only exception is for authorized La Junta segment outfitters that continue into the Taos Box segment after 12:00 pm. Use continuing through the Taos Box in this situation will not count toward historical use in the Taos Box, since this use generally would fall outside the allocated time period.
La Sauses	No restrictions will be placed on outfitted boaters.
Ute Mountain	The segment is closed to all boating from April 1 through May 31. Two launches are allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, but only one can be overnight. All launches must be reserved in advance on a first-come basis. A total of 16 people (passengers+guides, commercial or private) will be allowed each day.
Razorblades	To maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available, one launch for an overnight trip will be allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come basis. Overnight launches must be reserved in advance. Group size is limited to 16 people (passengers+guides). No additional restrictions will be placed on private/outfitted boating until monitoring shows that daily use is exceeding 32 people per day. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.
Upper Box	To maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available, one launch for an overnight trip will be allowed per day, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come basis. Overnight launches must be reserved in advance. Group size is limited to 16 people (passengers+guides). No additional restrictions will be placed on private/outfitted boating until monitoring shows that daily use is exceeding 32 people per day. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary.
La Junta	Two launches will be allowed per day, but only one can be overnight, with no more than 16 people (passengers+guides) to maintain primitive opportunities and due to the limited campsites available. Overnight launches will be available on a first-come basis. Friday, Saturday, Sunday and holiday launches will be assigned based on historic use records. The assignments will be assessed every 5 years, or as needed, and adjusted if necessary. Weekday launches will be available on a first-come basis. Outfitted groups are limited to 16 people (passengers+guides). Outfitters can occasionally exceed the group size for day trips through use of a pool - up to a maximum of 21 people per group, for a total of 10 times per season on a first-come basis. Due to the limited number of campsites available, one trip per day of 16 people (passengers+guides) will be allowed to camp on this segment, whether private or outfitted, on a first-come basis. Outfitted launches will not be able to pass or takeout at John Dunn Bridge before noon on weekends and holidays to help relieve congestion at the bridge. Trips wishing to continue below John Dunn Bridge will not be required to obtain a separate Taos Box launch unless monitoring determines a need.

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Taos Box	<p>All commercial launches will take place between 8:30 am and 12:30 pm.</p> <p>Weekends and holidays: up to 8 launches will be allowed per day and size will be limited to 21 passengers per launch.</p> <p>Weekdays: up to 8 launches will be allowed per day and size will be limited to 32 passengers per launch.</p> <p>Although no trading of passenger slots will be allowed between outfitters, they can occasionally exceed the day-use group size limits above through use of a pool, up to a maximum group size of 40 passengers and only on weekdays. Outfitters will request slots from the pool on a first-come basis. Initially the daily pool will have 15 passenger slots available.</p> <p>Over-limit fees: to allow an outfitter to fill trips, BLM will allow up to 4 extra passengers to be booked, but an extra fee will be imposed to remove any profit incentive for doing so. These extra passengers will not be counted towards an outfitter's historic use for allocation purposes. This option is not available for launches that have been augmented from the pool. The over-limit policy may be discontinued if monitoring indicates a need.</p>
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Table 4-2 Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Lower Gorge

Segment	Winter Oct 15 - Feb 28/29	Spring Mar 1 - May 14	Summer May 15 - Aug 14 & Labor Day Weekend	Fall Aug 15 - Oct 14
All Segments	<p>Over-limit fees: to allow an outfitter to fill trips, BLM will allow up to four extra passengers to be booked on Lower Gorge trips, but an extra fee will be imposed to remove any profit incentive for doing so. These extra passengers will not be counted towards an outfitter's historic use for allocation purposes. The overlimit may be discontinued if monitoring indicates a need.</p> <p>Initially, no specific use allocation will be made for individual outfitters. All outfitted use will be regulated by guidelines described below. Use will be allocated to specific outfitters when thresholds are exceeded on any given day. Once exceeded, that day will be rationed for the following five seasons. Each outfitter will be given a specific number of passengers as their allocation based on their percent of Lower Gorge use for that season and the previous four seasons.</p>			
Orilla Verde/ Pilar	<p>For trips that take place solely within Orilla Verde Recreation Area, maximum group size is 40 passengers, but there is no limit at this time on the number of launches.</p>			
	50 passengers per week through Pilar, reserved on a first-come first-serve basis, maximum group size of 32.	All flows - 120 passengers per day , first-come first-serve basis, maximum group size of 32.	<p>ALL FLOWS: No passage allowed past Orilla Verde Campground before 9am or after 3pm. Trips originating above Taos Junction will have to use (or join) an Orilla Verde/Pilar launch to continue downstream, provided group size requirements are met..</p> <p>BELOW 2000 CFS: 32 passengers per outfitter per day, one or two launches.</p> <p>BETWEEN 2000-4000 CFS: Each outfitter can take a total of 32 passengers in one or two groups through Pilar as part of their Orilla Verde allocation. In addition, one Racecourse trip per outfitter can launch above Pilar; limit is 40 passengers.</p> <p>ABOVE 4000 CFS: No boating unless private owners grant portage rights around the Pilar Bridge, or the bridge is reconstructed.</p> <p>POOL: The Racecourse and Orilla Verde/Pilar segments will have a combined pool of 50 per weekend and 100 per weekday which may be used to increase group size up to 90 on weekdays and 50 on weekends, on a first-come first-serve basis. Where augmented launches exceed 40 passengers, launches must split and be staggered in 10 minute intervals to minimize the impacts of large groups</p> <p>ALLOCATIONS: Specific days will be allocated when passengers exceed 300 (when flows are below 2000 cfs), or 450 (when flows are above 2000 cfs). These allocations will apply to all trips taken between Taos Junction Bridge and County Line.</p>	All flows - 120 passengers per day , first-come first-serve, maximum groups size of 32.
Racecourse	<p>Quartzite launch windows will be assigned each outfitter from 8:30am to 3:30pm. Limits are 40 passengers per launch, two launches per day per outfitter. On weekdays, outfitters will be able to combine these two launches into one by providing advance notice to BLM. Most trips will take out at County Line. Although no trades will be allowed between outfitters, BLM will maintain a Lower Gorge pool that all outfitters can draw from. Racecourse and Orilla Verde/Pilar will have a combined pool of 50 per day on weekends, and 100 on weekdays. The pool can be used to increase a launch to 50 passengers on weekends, and 90 passengers on weekdays. These augmented launches, as well as any combined launches, will be encouraged to be rescheduled during the noon period. When passenger numbers on any given day exceed 600 in the Racecourse, the size of the pool may be reduced, and/or that day will be allocated for the following five years for this and the Orilla Verde/Pilar segment combined, based on historic use during the season when the threshold was exceeded and the previous 4 seasons.</p>			
Bosque	<p>All trips for outfitters authorized to use this segment (except for high water trips originating above County Line and ending at Lovers' Lane) will count toward the daily limit of 50 passengers. Outfitters without a Bosque permit will not be allowed to float past Lovers' Lane.</p>			
	50 passengers per week , first-come first-serve basis.	50 passengers per day , first-come first-serve basis.	<p>50 passengers per day, first-come first-serve basis.</p> <p>ABOVE 2000 CFS: One Racecourse trip per outfitter per day can take out at Lovers' Lane.</p> <p>ABOVE 4000 CFS: All Racecourse trips can take out at County Line or Lovers' Lane, choice up to the outfitter.</p>	50 passengers per day , first-come first-serve basis.

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RIO GRANDE - LOWER GORGE

<i>Orilla Verde/Pilar Segment (Taos Junction Bridge to Quartzite Recreation Site)</i>	
All Boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Launch and takeout will be allowed at Taos Junction Bridge, the Cable Site (north of gauging station - kayak/canoe only), and Lone Juniper. Takeout will be allowed only at Orilla Verde Campground. Access at Karmic Wave will be allowed only for boaters in kayaks or canoes. Other sites may be accessed from the river to use shoreline facilities - boats can be moored or partially dragged on shore. Shoreline access will be restricted in designated areas and selected side channels closed to boating to protect wildlife habitat. C Until portage rights are granted at the Pilar Bridge, or the bridge is altered to allow safe passage at higher flows, all boaters will take out at Lone Juniper or Orilla Verde Campground when flows are 4,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) or higher. No public access is available in the village of Pilar except with landowner permission, or for an emergency. C A no stopping and quiet zone will be enforced from Pilar Campground downstream to the beginning of Karmic Wave. Sounds must be kept at conversational levels, except in emergencies.
Private Boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C No restrictions will be applied initially to private boaters until monitoring indicates that 100 or more private boaters per day are passing through the village of Pilar. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary. Measures may include providing information at upstream launch sites to encourage private boaters to take out at Orilla Verde Campground; prohibiting boating past Orilla Verde Campground takeout after a specified time; or others which may be suggested at that time.
Outfitted Boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C See Table 4-2, <i>Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Lower Gorge</i>.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Taos Junction: BLM will work with private partners to provide management of the private lands on the east side of the river between Taos Junction Bridge and the gauging station. If acquired, permanent facilities will be constructed at the Taos Junction boater takeout. If the private lands are not acquired, BLM will provide for boater access on the west side of the river. C Cable Site: the parking area at the Orilla gauging station will be relocated to the cable site. The vault toilet currently located across from the gauging station will be relocated to the new parking site. C Lone Juniper: the site will be redesigned to improve access. C Orilla Verde Campground: access will be improved; boater parking and launch/takeout will be separated from other uses. C See Camping section for additional information.
<i>Racecourse Segment (Quartzite Recreation Site to County Line Recreation Site)</i>	
All Boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C Quartzite, Souse Hole, and County Line are the main river access sites. C Locational boating will be available where desired, but vehicles must be parked in areas which have been approved by the Highway Department. Outfitted boater parking will be identified through BLM permit stipulations. C At Quartzite during congested periods, the beach may be divided into two zones - one for rafts that are inflated and rigged or canoes/kayaks (express lane) and one for rafts that are not inflated and rigged.
Private Boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C No restrictions will be placed on this group until monitoring indicates that 300 or more private boaters per day are launching from Quartzite. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary. Additional actions may include assigning launch times, encouraging use at less congested times, or other actions which might be suggested by interested parties.

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- Outfitted Boaters C See Table 4-2, *Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Lower Gorge*.
- Facilities C Quartzite: the level of the beach will be raised to allow use at higher flows, and improve traffic flow with signs and barriers. The BLM also will install a pay/emergency telephone.
- C Pilar North Parking Area/Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center Parking: a committee of stakeholders will make recommendations to provide for additional short- and long-term parking and improved restroom facilities for outfitted and private boaters and other users of this area.
- C Souse Hole: build a permanent rest room and provide more space for parking.
- C County Line Area: build permanent rest rooms, improve access and parking, install a pay/emergency phone, use signs and barriers for vehicle controls, and landscape.
- C Other Sites: provide portable or permanent vault toilets at additional sites if use, resource degradation or public safety warrants. The BLM will work with the Highway Department to provide safe access points for sightseeing and parking, and improve trail access to the river to control erosion and provide for user safety.
- Bosque Segment (County Line Recreation Site to Velarde Diversion Dam)***
- All Boaters C County Line, Lovers' Lane, Embudo Station (if owner allows) and Embudo South are the main river access sites. There will be no landing on private lands except in emergencies or with landowner permission.
- C A quiet zone will be enforced from County Line downstream to Embudo Station. Sounds will be kept at conversational levels except in emergency situations.
- Private Boaters C No additional restrictions will be placed until a threshold of 50 or more private boaters per day launching or floating past County Line is reached. Once this threshold is exceeded, additional controls may be implemented if determined to be necessary. Additional actions may include reducing group size, requiring call-in reservations, or other measures which may be proposed by residents, boaters or BLM.
- Outfitted Boaters C See Table 4-2, *Outfitted Boater Guidelines for the Lower Gorge*.
- Facilities C County Line: See the Racecourse section for a description.
- C Lovers' Lane: if public access is acquired, a permanent rest room will be built and a parking area established above the riparian area. If access to this parcel is not acquired, then BLM will work with stakeholders to determine alternative strategies.
- C Embudo Station: private facilities may be available if boaters make arrangements with the owner. If the Embudo South site is developed, BLM will limit development to what is needed to provide for resource protection or public safety, such as a vault toilet or trash receptacle, a small parking area, and a trail to the river.



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RIO EMBUDO***Rio Embudo Box (west boundary of Picuris Pueblo to BLM road 146 access point)***

- Private Boaters C Boaters will be required to register at river put-ins. BLM will monitor activity and may propose actions if more than 200 boaters per year are making use of this segment.
- Outfitted Boaters C No commercial use permits will be issued for boating on the Rio Embudo.
- Facilities C Low-key signing will be used to identify access points and mark public land boundaries. Parking areas will be defined with landscape barriers.

Other Segments

- All Boaters C BLM will cooperate with Picuris Pueblo in providing information to the public about their use restrictions. Downstream of Dixon, BLM will monitor use and propose actions to resolve any concerns related to boater use, such as unsafe parking, trespass, noise, or other issues.
- Facilities C No facilities are planned.

CASUAL USES

The public lands are used for a large variety of recreational pursuits that require little in the way of facilities or developments and for the most part, currently do not require intensive management. Wildlife and bird watching, recreational rock collecting, rock climbing, and camping away from developed sites are a few of these pursuits.

Casual recreation use was considered during development of proposals for vehicle use (refer to Access), since access is an important element in many of these activities. Non-motorized trails are also an important element in access and are described below under "Trails" (page 4-11). When parking or camping

within developed recreation areas or sites, visitors will have to keep vehicles within 25 feet of any designated route of travel. In the remainder of the planning area, vehicles will have to remain within 300 feet of designated routes; this restriction may be re-visited by the Taos Field Office during future transportation planning in adjacent planning areas.

An environmental assessment is being prepared to consider commercial hot air balloon activities near the Manby Springs area. A decision on this issue will be provided following additional public input and analysis.

FISHING

BLM will take steps to improve access to favored fishing sites, including steps to provide for improved access, or barrier-free fishing platforms where terrain

allows. Information will be provided at entry or key use sites to minimize conflicts with other users.

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CAMPING/PICNICKING

Steps will be taken to provide developed sites for both day and overnight use at several locations throughout the Rio Grande Corridor, with an emphasis at Wild Rivers and Orilla Verde Recreation Areas. Key river access sites, such as John Dunn Bridge, Taos Junction Bridge (the east shore), Quartzite and County Line will remain closed to camping but be developed for a variety of day-use activities.

Camping will be allowed throughout the corridor, with these guidelines:

- C Camping in Wild Rivers and Orilla Verde Recreation Areas is allowed only at developed or designated sites. Undeveloped campsites outside the two recreation areas will remain so, unless monitoring indicates a need for facilities (such as restrooms, trash containers, site designation, hardening) to mitigate resource damage.
- C Within Wild Rivers Recreation Area, no additional sites within the gorge will be designated for camping. Shelters visible from rim viewpoints will be removed as the shelters deteriorate.
- C Within Orilla Verde Recreation Area, camping will be allowed at designated primitive sites (Lone Juniper and two sites on the west side of the river).
- C Areas opened/closed to camping will be clearly signed or marked.
- C Overnight use will not be allowed within 300 yards of existing trailheads or trail descent points. An exception will be made for developed sites within the Wild Rivers Recreation Area and at the Raven and Powerline trailheads.
- C Human waste must be carried out by all overnight boating groups not staying in developed campgrounds.
- C Campfires in Wild Rivers and Orilla Verde Recreation Areas and at all developed sites will be allowed only in grills or facilities provided. In undeveloped areas, campfires will be allowed, but the use of camp stoves will be encouraged instead. Dead and down wood can be collected for campfires. Boaters will have to use firepans for any campfires along the river and may only use driftwood.
- C Facilities that are not universally accessible will be replaced or redesigned after considering physical and economic feasibility.
- C In the Copper Hill ACEC, primitive camping will be allowed except within 100 feet of rivers or streams to protect riparian habitat.

TRAILS

Trails have been used throughout the Rio Grande/Rio Embudo corridor to access favorite sites for fishing, boating, or other pursuits, or for the enjoyment of walking, biking or horseback riding. Table 4-3 lists the trails which will be maintained and/or built to continue providing for these opportunities. The following guidelines will be followed by BLM in implementing this plan, or by the trails' users:

- C When proposed trails cross state or private property, an access easement will be acquired before public use is encouraged. If an easement cannot be obtained, the trails will be rerouted to avoid the parcels.
- C Place directional signs at all trailheads and trail junctions.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Table 4-3 Existing/Planned Trails in the Rio Grande Corridor

<p>Rio Grande Corridor ACEC (Colorado) State Line Gauging Station Emery Orr</p> <p>Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River (New Mexico) East Rim - Sheeps Crossing to Sangre de Cristo Grant ^(P) Ute Mountain Cisneros, East and West Sunshine Valley Lee Razorblades Miner's Black Rock Spring John Dunn Manby Spring Raven, East & West West Rim - SR 567 north to Chiflo; closed north of John Dunn Bridge May 1-July 31 for wildlife ^(P) Yellowbank Powerline</p> <p>Wild Rivers Recreation Area Sheeps Crossing ^(NRT) Chiflo, East and West ^(NRT) Bear Crossing Big Arsenic Springs Little Arsenic Springs ^(NRT) La Junta ^(NRT) La Junta Nature Trail</p>	<p>Wild Rivers Recreation Area (continued) El Aguaje ^(NRT) Confluence Guadalupe Mountain Pescado Trail - linking Wild Rivers Recreation Area and the Red River Fish Hatchery ^(P) Red River Fault Loop Rinconda Loop Red River</p> <p>Orilla Verde Recreation Area La Vista Verde West Rim - Petaca to SR567 Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center Nature Trail La Cieneguilla Trail - Pilar Campground to Taos Junction Bridge ^(P)</p> <p>Lower Gorge ACEC Improve foot trails from parking areas along NM68 to river sites. Where terrain allows, BLM will construct a trail which parallels NM68 to connect these parking areas for foot or bicycle travellers. Rinconada Hill - County Line Recreation Site to Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center ^(P)</p> <p>Copper Hill ACEC Agua Caliente Rinconada Hill ^(P)</p>
<p>Notes: NRT = National Recreation Trail P = new trail or planned extension of existing trail</p>	